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Psychology, Ethics, and more
in a Galaxy Far, Far Away…

Issue 1

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"I Can't Live Without Her":
The destruction and re-emergence of the sacred feminine in the *Star Wars* saga
by Lady Aeryn

The sacred feminine, as defined by mythology scholar Joseph Campbell, refers to the "mythic representation of the mother Goddess symbolized through images and events connected with fertility and reproduction."[1] The *Star Wars* saga uses this imagery, or the lack thereof, throughout all six films to illustrate decay and rebirth on a broad galactic scale with the Republic-turned-Empire, and on a more personal scale with the parallel journey of Anakin Skywalker/Darth Vader.

Campbell states that the linking of images of the earth or mother Goddess to symbols of fertility and reproduction came about largely through agricultural societies such as ancient Egypt: the earth gives life to plants just as the woman gives birth to her child.[2] The energy of the female became synonymous with the energy of life itself. He goes on to say of the Goddess: "She is the world creatrix...She encompasses the encompassing, nourishes the nourishing, and is the life of everything that lives. She is also the death of everything that dies."[3] She is renewal, and rebirth, and without her, the world is not truly alive. It is not coincidental that the prequel trilogy, before the Empire rises, is full of female characters and imagery -- nearly all of which is gone by the time of the original trilogy, where the tyrannical Empire has taken over. The destruction of the female heralds the destruction of the Republic, and of Anakin himself, and it is the re-emergence of that energy in *Return of the Jedi* that marks the Empire's fall and Anakin's redemption.

The strong female imagery of the prequels is present almost from the very first frames of *The Phantom Menace*, which introduce the world of Naboo and its queen, Padmé Amidala. Naboo, which features heavily in the first two prequels, is the most feminine planet in the saga: a verdant, water-filled world teeming with flora and fauna, the architecture of both its dominant races (human and Gungan) full of gentle slopes and curves. And of course, it is ruled by a queen. Women are prominent throughout the prequels -- in Republic society -- as mothers, rulers, Senators, advisors, fighter pilots, even bounty hunters and Jedi. Children are also a fixture: young Anakin, the other slave children, and other children in the Naboo parade in *Menace*; *Attack of the Clones* has young Boba Fett, Padmé's nieces (in the deleted scenes), and the Jedi younglings, the latter two of whom briefly show up again in *Revenge of the Sith*.

Padmé is perhaps the most dominant embodiment of the feminine/Goddess figure in the entire saga, and certainly in the prequel trilogy. She fits to a tee the role of the Goddess in Anakin's Hero journey: "She is the paragon of all paragons of beauty, the reply to all desire...She is mother, sister, mistress, bride...the incarnation of the promise of perfection; the soul's assurance that, at the conclusion of its exile in a world of organized inadequacies, the bliss that once was known will be known again."[5] She is the prequels' female lead, queen and senator of the fertile Naboo, caretaker and lover/wife to the saga's central character, and mother to two of the original trilogy's most important heroes. Her very name is associated with life and fertility, "padme" being Hindu for "sacred lotus" -- a flower crucial to Hindu creation mythology.[4] Unlike her future daughter Padmé is not primarily a warrior (though is certainly capable), has more opportunity to be a nurturer, tends to favor more classically soft, flowing gowns and hairstyles, and is the only character seen pregnant and giving birth.

Anakin, the saga's central figure, while male and from a world the climatic opposite of Naboo, is strongly linked to the feminine from his first moments on-screen. Out of all the newcomers to his shop it is Padmé he is drawn to instantly, and his first significant dialogue is with her. His very conception was apparently virgin in nature, and he was raised solely by his mother Shmi. She appears to have been the only constant in a life of being shunted from place to place as a slave, and upon the prospect of leaving Tatooine, the only thing he appears to regret -- and what almost makes him stay -- is that he must leave Shmi behind. (He later remarks to Padmé in a deleted scene from Episode II that the only place he ever considered home was wherever his mom was.) The very nature of his birth and upbringing has predisposed him to seek comfort in a feminine form; he constantly craves a stable female presence in his life. Upon separation from Shmi in *Menace* he immediately finds comfort in Padmé, who assumes the role of caretaker. In the ten-year gap before he sees Padmé and his mother again, Anakin thinks and dreams of them frequently. In Episode II he passionately pursues a romance with Padmé, and even when she rejects his pursuit, he still considers her presence "soothing." After Shmi's death, she becomes the single most important person in Anakin's existence.

Even at the beginning of the saga, there are signs of the feminine energy being marginalized or threatened. Coruscant, the capital of the Republic, is pure city, all signs of natural plant or animal life long ago obliterated. For thousands of years the Jedi Order has continued the practice of separating their initiates from their birth families and severing all contact, eliminating the need for birth mothers. The plot of *Menace* centers on a threat to Naboo and Amidala; likewise the other two prequels' plots are propelled by a threat on her life -- which in every case serves to increase Senator (and later Chancellor) Palpatine's attempts to take the Republic more and more under his control. *Clones* marks the beginning of the feminine energy being destroyed in earnest with the brutal deaths of several female characters: Padmé's decoy dies bleeding in her arms after being hit by an explosion meant for Padmé, Padmé's would-be assassin loses her arm and is poisoned by a dart, and Shmi is kidnapped and tortured for weeks by Tusken Raiders before dying in Anakin's arms.

Clones also shows the marginalizing of female energy in another medium -- the introduction of the clone army on Kamino. Kamino is as artificial, monochromatic, and sterile as Naboo is fertile, its inhabitants only able to live on the world’s violent seas in giant metal enclosures. Their entire existence appears to center on the mass-production (and sale) of human life in massive *Brave New World*-esque[6] facilities: human beings artificially conceived and mass-produced literally by assembly-line, each genetically modified to grow and behave a certain way. The Kaminoans have further asexualized this kind of reproduction by eliminating the need for any maternal involvement, simply duplicating a single original male host and gestating the babies in glass tubes. The facilities stand in stark contrast to the corresponding scenes of Anakin and Padmé's romance: the Kaminoans artificially "create" human life which will one day serve as the footsoldiers for a tyrannical Empire -- whereas the courtship/marriage of Anakin and Padmé in the lush environs of Naboo will result in the natural birth of Luke and Leia, the downfall of that Empire.

Threatened by an attacking army of machines from outside, the Republic eagerly seizes on the use of this ready-made army of seemingly quickly-produced, completely obedient humans who have absolutely no need or desire to be nurtured. These clones become the stormtroopers for the Empire in the original trilogy, and the Republic's embracing of them to fight their war marks a further step towards that eventual transformation.

This destruction of the feminine, while subtly reflecting the changing nature of the Republic, has an even more direct influence on the path of Anakin, and the way he himself shapes the galaxy. Anakin, while from a world the climatic polar opposite of Naboo, is linked to the feminine from nearly his first moment on-screen in Episode I. He is instantly drawn to Padmé; his first significant spoken dialogue is with her, asking if she is an angel. It is learned he was borne solely from his mother with no known biological father. He was raised only by his mother, who appears to have been the only constant in a life of being shunted from place to place as a slave. The very nature of his birth and upbringing predispose him to seek comfort in a female form. Even Obi-Wan, at one point in an expanded universe novel, makes the observation that Anakin "misses the female,[7]" and is most at ease in their presence, a notion backed up by Anakin calling Padmé's presence -- even after her painful rejection of his declaration of love -- "soothing" in *Clones*.

It is separation from that feminine, or the threat thereof, that mark the dark moments in Anakin's journey. Separating from his mother in *Menace* heightens a fear of losing his loved ones that never completely goes away. The threats against Padmé's life in *Clones* prompt him to lash in anger at Zam Wesell, and later rashly attack Count Dooku, costing him his right arm. Also in *Clones*, his mother's violent death spurs his first true step towards the dark side when he vengefully slaughters the entire Tusken village holding her captive. And of course most prominently the nightmare visions of Padmé's death in *Revenge* send Anakin on a desperate course that ends with him turning to the Dark Side, destroying the Jedi, and Padmé herself.

Revenge shows the ultimate subjugation of feminine energy by the oncoming Empire. The two most dominant worlds, Coruscant and Mustafar, are -- with the exception of Padmé's apartment -- anything but nurturing environs. Kashyyyk, the greenest planet in the film, is overtaken by clone troopers, many of its native Wookiees slaughtered. Naboo is all but absent. Padmé herself, the only significant female character, is increasingly marginalized by both the dying Republic and her husband. She is forced to hide her pregnancy, or she and Anakin would face dire consequences from the Jedi and Senate. The Republic is coming more and more under Palpatine's direct control and therefore Senators such as herself are increasingly powerless. Anakin is so terrified of the prospect of her dying he will use any means to ensure he does not lose her -- in the process of trying to protect her he increasingly shuts her out, rendering her unable to comfort him.

In addition, two female Jedi are shown killed by their clone troopers during the massacre of Order 66, and another is glimpsed via hologram being killed by Anakin. The Jedi younglings are murdered by Anakin in arguably the most vicious act of his transformation. The true point of no return for him, however, comes in his own rage-induced Force-choke of Padmé. This seals his physical destruction in that it prompts the duel that leaves him so badly maimed he can’t survive without machines, and his spiritual destruction in that by causing Padmé’s death and the death of his child -- he believes -- he has destroyed everything good in his life, and has destroyed his own future. On a broader level, the attack by Anakin, the physical representation of the newly-formed Empire, upon Padmé -- the prequels’ primary Goddess figure, and herself carrying new life within her -- is the Empire strangling everything maternal and feminine. Padmé herself gives birth and dies in a sterile white hospital room far away from her beloved Naboo, which is shown for the only time in Episode III after her death, itself now dark and subdued. With her death comes the seemingly ultimate destruction of all that is female and nurturing, the only glimmer of hope remaining in her newborn daughter and son.

A New Hope shows the galaxy taken over by the harsh, dictatorial Empire. The Empire itself is the embodiment of sterility, characterized in starkly lit, lifeless metal battle machines and identical faceless stormtroopers. Its officer ranks are solely made up of white human men, not a single woman or non-human anywhere in sight. Even in civilian locales such as Mos Eisley, women are sparse and children completely absent. As Darth Vader, Anakin himself has become the most visible symbol and embodiment of the Empire, a harsh, brutal machine who chokes those who anger him. The only female characters are Princess Leia and Aunt Beru, the latter of whom (and the more maternal of the two) is violently murdered early on, and Leia herself is hunted and slated for execution. But even in *A New Hope*, there are glimmers of the feminine energy that the Empire has not yet crushed: even the typically warrior-like Leia has moments of nurturing, comforting Luke after Obi-Wan dies and before he goes into battle. Leia also, as a leader in the Rebellion, presents a stark contrast to the all-male Empire. The Rebellion houses its main base in the jungles of Yavin IV, a moon that from space much resembles Naboo. The Empire fails to destroy the moon, losing its Death Star in the process. Vader himself remains seemingly unchanged at the end of the film, but has sensed the presence of the one he will soon discover is his and Padmé's long-lost son -- which will launch Vader on an obsessive quest to find him.

The Empire Strikes Back, by the very nature of its title, is the Empire reasserting itself against this new emergence with renewed force (pun not intended), and as such, any inklings of feminine energy are still difficult to spot. Occasional glimpses are shown of other women in the Rebellion -- which is constantly on the run -- and in Cloud City, but none nearly as prominent as Leia or even Aunt Beru, and children are still absent. The film's filled with largely artificial or inhospitable locales. Hoth is frigid and doesn't have enough life "to fill a space cruiser," and the denizens of itself and Bespin are forced to construct artificial protective habitats to exist there. The exception is of course the swamp-filled Dagobah, where Luke -- Padmé's avatar in the second trilogy -- in earnest begins his training in the Force and prepares to confront Vader, where he will learn his true heritage. Leia starts to show a softer side as she falls in love with Han, dressing in soft flowing attire in their private quarters in Cloud City -- attire that quickly disappears again upon capture by Vader, who later freezes Han in carbonite after Leia declares her love for him. In addition to being Han's lover she is also his comforter after his torture, and likewise comforts/tends to Luke after rescuing him from Vader and at the end of the film. Vader himself is inadvertently re-linking himself to the feminine in his desperate attempt to claim Luke as his son, for to truly claim to be Luke's father he will have to acknowledge that he was once a man who was desperately in love with a woman, enough to conceive a child with her.

The title of the final film in the saga, *Return of the Jedi*, indicates some sort of rebirth is at hand, and there is certainly a strong resurgence in feminine energy in this film. The beginning of the film even recalls the beginning of *Menace*, the view of a beautiful green world marred by the machine of war looming above it. The feminine energy is present, but the Empire still very much threatens it -- or in this case is exploiting it, using the pristine forest world of Endor as a base for constructing a monstrous death machine meant to be the final defeat of the Rebellion and ultimate assertion of the Empire's might. There are other signs of re-emergence scattered throughout the film -- Leia is reunited with her lover and is the one to awaken him from his carbonite stasis (in itself a rebirth); the leader of the Rebel Alliance is the most maternal-looking woman to appear in the movies since the ill-fated Beru. But most of the feminine symbolism in Jedi is associated with Endor, which is easily the most nurturing planetary environment shown in the original trilogy, filled with thick, lush, vibrantly green forests, opposite in every way to the Death Star the Empire is

building above it. It is home to the tree-dwelling Ewoks, who include the only mothers and children seen in the saga since Episode III, and who help the Rebels overcome Palpatine's troops -- many of them the remnants of those long ago Kamino clones -- and clear the way for the Rebel fleet to destroy the Death Star. Surrounded by this energy Leia's warrior exterior softens, briefly donning a simple, earth-toned gown and leaving her long hair completely unbound. It is also on Endor that Padmé is discussed for the first and only time in the trilogy by both her children.

The representation of feminine energy also occurs, most importantly for Vader, in Luke himself: never is Luke more his mother's avatar, the embodiment of her spirit and faith, than in *Jedi*. This is the film where he has undertaken the quest Padmé failed in years ago, and -- despite his claims of not remembering her -- no less than twice almost exactly echoes her final words as affirmation of his belief of the good in his father. Vader does not believe he himself can be saved, but still very much wants Luke at his side on the path he is on, the path Padmé was unwilling to accept; he still deeply desires the sort of just, compassionate presence that Luke and Padmé represent beside him in some form. He struggles against Luke's attempts to turn him back and denies Anakin means anything, even threatening Leia to manipulate Luke into giving in to the Dark Side himself. All through their battle, Luke continues to try to appeal to him. But it is not until Vader is faced with the sight of his son screaming and pleading to him as he dies before Vader's eyes -- much like Padmé in the dreams that tormented him years before -- that Anakin is able to finally rise up and kill Palpatine. Indeed, the juvenile novelization of Jedi -- the first edition of movie novelizations that take prequel events into account -- declares that it is ultimately the memory of Padmé's "undying love" for Anakin that directly spurs him into realizing he can not simply stand by and watch Palpatine murder their son.[8] By saving Luke, Anakin casts off Darth Vader permanently and kills the Emperor, sealing the death of the Empire.

It is by re-embracing the feminine -- or rather, the part of himself that sought and loved the feminine -- through Luke that Anakin is redeemed and the galaxy is saved. Endor becomes the site of galactic rebirth, in the hope of a new, less tyrannical government under the Rebel Alliance. On a more personal level it is the site of a new beginning for the Skywalker family: it is where Vader's physical remains are destroyed and where Luke sees the fully restored spirit of his father; it is where Anakin and Padmé's children are reunited and their daughter happily resolves her relationship with Han, opening up the possibility that one day she may marry and have children of her own, in hopefully a far more pleasant galaxy than the one she was raised in. In his redemption Anakin destroys the very Empire he helped build, paving the way for the galaxy to renew itself.

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Issue 2

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Fire and Water: Anakin and Padmé
by lazypadawan

Of all of the archetypal qualities of the various *Star Wars* characters, one of the most interesting involves the tragic love affair between Anakin Skywalker and Padmé Amidala. As male and female, they fit the anima (the feminine) and animus (the masculine) dichotomy. But, one could make the observation that they are also linked symbolically to opposing natural elements: fire and water. Together, they bring harmony to one another, but as events of the *Star Wars* saga show, it is difficult to keep a fiery spirit contained.

Anakin Skywalker is often visually associated with fire. *In The Phantom Menace*, we discover his origins on Tatooine, a hot desert planet scorched by two suns. As his story progresses, fire is often present at life-changing moments: when Anakin learns at Qui-Gon's cremation that he's going to be trained by Obi-Wan, when Anakin confesses his love for Padmé in a room lit only by a fireplace, when Shmi dies and Anakin takes his first step toward the Dark Side at the Sand People's fire-lit camp, and of course, when he completes his transformation into Darth Vader on fiery Mustafar. When Anakin is later redeemed and dies in *Return of the Jedi*, the remainder of his body is burnt in a pyre on Endor.

Padmé Amidala is just as often associated with water. Her homeworld Naboo is full of deep oceans, swamps, lakes, rivers, and waterfalls. Padmé's association with water is not particularly obvious in *The Phantom Menace*, save for the watery locations shown in the film. But in Attack of the Clones, the association with water is much more apparent. It is interesting to note that many of her costumes in that film are in some shade of blue. Even some of the gowns that she wears that are different colors seem to have some quality evocative of sunlight on the water, such as the so-called "rainbow" dress she wears when she and Anakin arrive at the Varykino retreat. Even her apartment on Coruscant has blue walls. She looks to the remote lake country of Naboo as her shelter, safe from those who wish to harm her and eventually, a safe place to carry out a clandestine love affair. One of her happy childhood memories there is swimming in the lake. As if to drive the point home, she tells Anakin, "I love the water" as they look out on the lake.

Even when Padmé dies, she is still symbolized by water. "She (costume designer Trisha Biggar)...explained that the color -- this beautiful azure blue -- and the rippled fabric matched the ethereal and melancholy landscape of the Naboo lake retreat at Lake Como...this is where Padmé had wanted to escape with Anakin, and the funeral gown symbolizes her spiritual return to that lake."[1]

Fire and water represent similar things among Eastern and Eastern-influenced schools of thought. Feng shui regards the element of fire as active, strong, impulsive, and attractive.[2] Many would associate those qualities with Anakin. The young Jedi is quick to act in every situation, almost too quick at times. Since he is the Chosen One, the Force is naturally strong in him, making him quite powerful at a young age. Feng shui regards the element of water as flowing, travelling, learning, communicating, and influencing others.[3] Padmé -- former ruler, Senator, and diploma t-- would share many of those qualities as well.

Modern neo-paganism takes a similar view of fire and water, perhaps influenced by Eastern religion. In Wicca, "fire is a purifying, masculine energy...connected with strong will and energy." There is also an association of fire with fertility.[4] It is fitting then that fire is associated with the male half of the romantic couple. Given that one of Anakin's important contributions is fathering another generation of heroes, the association with fertility is

appropriate as well. "Water is a feminine energy and highly connected with the aspects of the Goddess." It is also used for "healing, cleansing, and purification."[5] As not only Anakin's partner but also as the prequel trilogy's main female character, Padmé certainly represents the anima, the feminine energy.

What happens when these energies are combined? In Taoism, fire and water symbolize "deeper sides of our nature."[6] The fire is passionate and volatile, the water is calm, centered, soft, and flexible. "Using the more contained and settled 'water' side is using thoughtfulness, logic, and control to nurture and guide our more impulsive and wild side."[7] While water is potentially destructive, most of the watery locations on Naboo are peaceful, as opposed to the stormy seas of Kamino. This aspect of water better reflects Padmé's personality, even though she is not always serene, nor is she passive. After all, water has currents and its own energy. In the films, Anakin frequently looks to Padmé to comfort him, guide him, and nurture him, whether it's when he's a young boy leaving home for the first time or confiding in her his troubling visions or frustrations. Padmé is usually able to diffuse his temper in a way few other characters can. When Anakin expresses his frustrations with Obi-Wan in *Attack of the Clones*, Padmé gently reminds him mentors had a way of seeing our mistakes and that is how we grow. When he is upset that Padmé and Queen Jamillia are discussing without his input where to find safety on Naboo, she calms him down and miraculously puts him in his place without upsetting him further. As Anakin tells her later on in the film, "Your presence is soothing." When Anakin is calm, he is able to act and use his abilities in a constructive way.

Conversely, "using...the excitable and temperamental 'fire' nature, to complete and balance the often too staid and overly controlling 'water' nature, is allowing that side of our character expression."[8] It is clear Padmé is drawn to Anakin's passionate personality, bringing out her own fire in the process. He promises excitement and a life beyond responsibility and duty. He makes her laugh. He allows her to express the real person behind the political persona. The exchange between them during the Geonosis battle ("You call this a diplomatic solution?/"No, I call it aggressive negotiations") with a gleam in their eyes is reveals the exhilaration they feel by being together in a dangerous situation. Padmé generally abhors violence and even when she is pressed into action, she's usually all business. This is the first and only time she ever seems to enjoy fighting. Anakin brought out the happy warrior in Padmé.

"By finding a balance between these two sides of our makeup, we become more complete and whole."[9] The wedding scene at the end of *Attack of the Clones* symbolizes the union between fire and water: during the ceremony, the setting sun blazes brightly over the lake. Anakin and Padmé feel complete and whole when they are together. One could argue that it is when they are out of balance is when things go wrong. Anakin's nightmares in *Revenge of the Sith* drive him to take matters into his own hands, disregarding Padmé's counsel, even her values, when he turns to evil in a misguided attempt to save her. Padmé is isolated from her homeworld and vulnerable as a mother-to-be forced to hide her pregnancy, so she is cut off from the source of her spiritual energy. The fires of Mustafar are a metaphor for how Anakin's passions are so out of control, Padmé's water spirit is no match for them. Her pleas for Anakin to reject the Dark Side and leave Mustafar with her fail to persuade him. When he believes Padmé has betrayed him, he strangles her, an act that ultimately leads to her demise. Anakin's out-of-control passions literally consume him and all but destroys his body after his duel with Obi-Wan. Padmé, broken-hearted, retreats into herself and "drowns." Describing the dress she wears in Padmé's funeral scene in Revenge of the Sith, Natalie Portman said, "Someone said to me it was very Ophelia. With the flowers and the hair, it does look like I'm drowning."[10] Ultimately Padmé's body is

returned to her homeworld, the river in the background as her funeral procession moves through the streets of Theed.

Fire can bring warmth and light, as Anakin's potential could have (and eventually) brought light to the galaxy, and as Padmé found true love with him. But fire can also destroy, as Anakin's powerful emotions spun out of control, losing everything he sought to save in the process. One would hope that a redeemed Anakin could be reunited with Padmé. Regardless, their legacies lie with their children, Luke and Leia, who as their children may represent a physical manifestation of that balance between the elements of fire and water.

Footnotes:

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Issue 3

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Caring Too Much: The Hero's Conundrum
by Matril

Note: This paper contains spoilers concerning Heroes *Season 1*

What defines a hero? Courage, honor, integrity – all of these could be considered crucial traits of a heroic figure. And then there is loyalty. We expect our heroes to be free from any form of treachery; they would lose our admiration otherwise. However, this attribute is more ambiguous than it might initially appear. Often the hero is called upon to serve a greater good which requires him to sacrifice the safety or well-being of his friends. He is faced with a great conundrum. To ignore the greater good may result in widespread devastation, the fall of all the principles the hero stands for. And yet, if he abandons his friends, he no longer seems heroic in the eyes of the audience. Either choice diminishes his heroism. How the hero resolves the matter, ultimately, reveals the true nature of his character.

Luke Skywalker faces this crisis in *The Empire Strikes Back* when he sees a vision of his friends in pain and danger. His immediate impulse is to go to their rescue, but Yoda counsels against this, warning that he will endanger everything that he has fought to preserve. Luke cannot be so resigned. "And sacrifice Han and Leia?" he demands. Yoda bluntly tells him, "If you honor what they fight for, yes." Irvin Kershner acknowledged this dilemma: "'This decision…is the element of ambiguity that makes the picture's content so rich. Whatever Luke decides can be interpreted two ways. His decision can be seen as a character strength or a character weakness, depending on how you look at it. What is more moral: to try to save the world or to attempt to rescue the friends closest to your heart? That is the moral dilemma at the root of the matter'" (Arnold 200). The galaxy, or Han and Leia? Luke, at this time, chooses his friends.

What would we think of Luke if he had chosen otherwise? As it is, he proves himself rash and impulsive, much like his father Anakin, whose behavior provides an all too-clear-example of the ambiguous nature of loyalty. Continually favoring the safety of his loved ones - his mother, Obi-Wan and Padmé - over the more general duties of the Jedi, Anakin's devotion was admirable in many ways, yet, when taken to excess, it ultimately led to his downfall. His attempts to save Padmé resulted in galaxy-wide suffering. Luke's similar devotion is therefore problematic. Still, if Luke had forsaken that devotion and instead remained on Dagobah, we could not help but see him as disloyal, heartless, even treacherous. And so, even while he hangs from the underside of Cloud City, broken and defeated, having endangered the life of the one remaining Jedi and last best hope for the galaxy – still, he is a hero. His loyalty to his friends is what defines him; on Bespin, it is even what rescues him, as he calls on Leia to find him.

This theme recurs in countless incarnations of heroes. For example, the crew of the Starship Enterprise in *Star Trek III: The Search for Spock* find themselves faced with the dilemma of either obeying the Federation's laws and abandoning their friend Spock to death on the forbidden planet of Genesis, or becoming lawbreakers, risking lives and starships, to reclaim his body and restore his soul. Spock himself would raise an eyebrow at their decision, stating that by all logic, "The good of the many outweighs the good of the few" (Trek II). Indeed, it was this belief that led him to sacrifice his life for the rest of the crew. He would expect them to accept his death and go on with their lives. However, Spock's friendship was too precious to his companions, their loyalty too great for them to abandon him. They, too, make the rash, impulsive choice, and who cannot admire their

heroism? They have turned the Vulcan's truth on its head, as Spock's human mother wryly points out in *Star Trek IV* when his companions will shortly return to Earth to face judgment for their serious lawbreaking. "You stand here alive because of a mistake made by your flawed, feeling, human friends. They have sacrificed their futures because they believed that the good of the one - you - was more important to them." Spock notes, "Humans make illogical decisions." Warmly his mother agrees, "They do indeed" (Trek IV). It is this irrational but deep loyalty that defines heroes of real humanity.

In the television show *Heroes* this dilemma of the greater good versus personal loyalty is a crucial theme, one that plays out most dramatically in the impending atomic explosion that will destroy most of New York City and its inhabitants. When we learn that this explosion is preventable, but certain characters have chosen to let it happen, their characters become repugnant. For example, Mr. Linderman's declaration that it will only destroy .07% of the population, that it is a necessary evil for the greater good of rallying the nation, is altogether appalling. (*Heroes*, ".07%") And yet all of this is turned on its head when it is revealed that the source of the explosion is a man, Peter Petrelli, who has proven to be heroic himself and is much beloved by other heroic figures in the series. Now the dilemma is more personal, and hence less clear-cut. Allowing Peter to live will result in the deaths of thousands. Yet Peter's friend Claire, even as she watches him ignite with atomic power, cannot bear to shoot him. We would think much less of her if she were capable of it, even though her inability to do it implicitly makes her responsible for the destruction of New York. But it is here that the dilemma is resolved by something else altogether: Peter's brother Nathan, attaining true heroism at last, uses his power of flight to carry Peter into the sky. (*Heroes*, "Exploding Man") Self-sacrifice saves the world, without diminishing the hero's loyalty in the slightest.

Finding a third choice – that is true heroism. In the *Harry Potter* series, the title character faces this dilemma in various forms, but it is Dumbledore who directly describes the hero's conundrum in *The Order of the Phoenix*.

"Do you see, Harry? Do you see the flaw in my brilliant plan now? I had fallen into the trap I had foreseen, that I had told myself I could avoid, that I must avoid...I cared about you too much…I cared more for your happiness
than your knowing the truth, more for your peace of mind than my plan, more for your life than the lives that might be lost, if the plan failed…What did I care if numbers of nameless and faceless people and creatures were slaughtered in the vague future, if in the here and now you were alive, and well, and happy?" (838-9)

We have come to value Dumbledore's wisdom and foresight throughout the series; to have him admit such a serious error, one that could have dire consequences upon countless lives, is troubling. Yet it is also Dumbledore's care and concern for Harry that have made us admire him. If he had abandoned those traits, even for a greater good, we could no longer think so highly of him.

Toward the end of the series it appears that Dumbledore has, in fact, chosen the greater good in favor of Harry's very life. Even Snape, who makes no secret of his deep dislike of Harry, is disgusted by this. "You have kept him alive so that he can die at the right moment...you have been raising him like a pig for slaughter" (*DH*, 687). Dumbledore's character appears altogether execrable, until it is revealed that he has found that third choice. Harry will sacrifice himself to defeat Voldemort, and yet he does not have to die. Dumbledore has arranged matters to achieve a balance between his loyalty and love for

Harry, and the fate of the rest of the world. He remains a hero – flawed, perhaps, but loyal to the end.

Luke's loyalty to his friends, though greatly admirable, brings him into serious trouble in *The Empire Strikes Back*. But where does it leave him at the end of the saga? In *Return of the Jedi* Luke's loyalty has found a new recipient in the form of his fallen father, Darth Vader. He refuses to fight Vader, though his Jedi masters insist that with the entire galaxy at stake, it is their only hope for freedom. Ironically, both Ben Kenobi and the Emperor condemn Luke's loyalty; Ben with a resigned, "Then the Emperor has already won" and Palpatine with a snide, "By now you must know he can never be turned." Luke's behavior, by any logical view, is sheer folly. At best his choice will result in his own death; at worse, it spells doom for the entire galaxy. But how greatly it would diminish Luke's heroism if he were to strike down Vader, to treat him as an enemy. We love Luke because he is filled with compassion, with unstinting loyalty to those he holds dear. His character would be destroyed by the treachery of patricide.

Instead, Luke pulls back from the brink of anger and qualifies his actions with a warm tribute to Anakin. "I am a Jedi, like my father before me." He has not betrayed his father, but nor has he betrayed the ideals of the Jedi. With such a legacy, his self-sacrifice is the third choice necessary to solve the hero's conundrum. In the process, Anakin is redeemed, reclaiming his own heroism by protecting his son. The Empire is defeated, and Luke is free to enjoy the companionship of everyone dear to him. The greater good and personal loyalty are no longer at odds, and the hero emerges more heroic than ever before.

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The Shame of a Galaxy:
One Perspective on Slavery in the *Star Wars* Saga
by Reihla

"The slave is doomed to worship time and fate and death, because they are greater than anything he finds in himself, and because all his thoughts are of things which they devour."
- Bertrand Russell (1872-1970)

From the earliest scripts George Lucas has consistently pulled political issues – both modern and historical – into the fictional *Star Wars* universe. This fact makes it extremely unlikely that his use of slavery as a plot device is accidental throughout the saga. This paper will examine the way slavery is depicted in the galaxy far, far away, and it will examine the possible roles it plays when considered in relation to the central character of Anakin Skywalker.

Slavery in the real world has existed in some form or fashion throughout all of human history. It is one of mankind's oldest and most heinous institutions. Mark Thornton, in a daily article for the Ludwig Von Mises Instutute, writes that slavery can easily contribute to a young person following the wrong path. He sums slavery up this way: "Slavery is the antithesis of humanity, depriving man materially, socially, and spiritually and contributes especially to the fragility of family bonds. Even in its most platonic form, it leaves scars of resentment, detachment and fear that can last for generations."[1] Certainly real human history bears this out.

The similarities between slavery in the real world and the way it is depicted in the *Star Wars* galaxy are numerous. Take, for example, slavery on Tatooine. Here, the ownership of sentient beings to provide service is an issue of economics. Slaves are very numerous, requiring housing that takes up an entire section of the city of Mos Espa.[2] By their very number we are led to assume that they are a primary source of labor. We are shown in Episode I that entire families can belong to one master, that they live in assigned "slave quarters," that their money is scarce and their food stores are meager. It can't help but bring to mind slavery in America's antebellum south.

In fact, on Tatooine, the number of slaves a master owns is indicative of their wealth and status, just as it was in the pre-civil war southern states. This point is brought home when Qui-Gon explains the reason he couldn't free Shmi as well as Anakin. "Watto wouldn't have it. Slaves give status and lend prestige to their owners here on Tatooine."[3] At the same time we are told that the Hutts on Tatooine, who rule much like royalty, own many slaves. Specifically, they control "the bulk of the trafficking in illegal goods, piracy and slavery" that generates most of Tatooine's wealth.[4]

The examples of slavery we are shown on Tatooine appear similar in many ways to modern forms of slavery. Though we have no idea how people become slaves on Tatooine, we assume it is in the same ways as the real world. Trafficking victims are enslaved by many means, including deception, fraud, intimidation, force, indebtedness and threats. Its victims are primarily women and children and their most common destination is the sex trade. It is now estimated that there are over 27 million enslaved persons worldwide, with those numbers growing constantly.[5]

Even the *Star Wars* universe is not immune to depictions of the sex slave trade. Just before the Boonta Eve race in *The Phantom Menace* novelization we see “A line of slave girls of varying species came last, chained together there for the amusement of those who had chosen freely to attend.”[6] We are also shown a glimpse of Anakin’s nemesis Sebulba as he prepares for a race with the assistance of two beautiful Twi’lek slave girls. Even in the original trilogy women are shown in bondage, for example, in *Return of the Jedi* the Twi’lek called Oola dances for Jabba on the end of a chain leash. Our own heroine, Princess Leia, is likewise forced to wear revealing slave clothing and submit to the Hutt overlord’s disgusting advances.

It is unfortunate, but women sold into sexual slavery have little or no value both in the real world and in the *Star Wars* universe. The insignificance of their lives is brought home when Oola refuses to submit to Jabba’s demands. He responds with fury and drops her into the Rancor pit to be food for his monster pet. In the real world this same type of disposal happens all the time as slave women are drugged, used and then discarded.

It is worth mentioning that not all slave life on Tatooine is held in such low regard. Consider the way Anakin and Shmi were valued by Watto. Slaves are clearly worth more than a racing pod, as Watto refuses to bet his two slaves against one racing pod, even though Qui-Gon claims it is the fastest ever built. He will, however, wager the life of his one small boy slave against that same racing pod. Others recognize the value of someone else’s slave property as well. Even Sebulba, Anakin’s podracing nemesis, tells Anakin “If you weren’t a slave, I’d squash you here and now!”[7] Anakin himself drives the point home with his reply: “Yeah, it’d be a pity if you had to pay for me.” Even with this nod to the slave’s value, we can recognize that they are not prized as living beings, but rather as a financial investment.

Perhaps the most startling similarity between our modern world and George Lucas’s fictional universe is the remarkably similar way the governments view slavery. When Padmé discovers that Anakin is a slave she cannot hide her shock. Seeing her dismay, Anakin is quick to insist he is a *person*, underscoring the age-old problem of slavery – the perception that a slave is no more than unthinking, unfeeling property.[8] The conversation between Padmé and Shmi tells us all we need to know about the Republic’s views on slavery. “I can’t believe slavery is still permitted in the galaxy. The Republic’s anti-slavery laws should –“ “The Republic doesn’t exist out here…. We must survive on our own.”[9]

In our enlightened society it is startling to realize that our world governments have ignored slavery and human trafficking the same way the Republic did. They prefer to overlook that it exists outside the boundaries they can easily enforce. What surprises us even more than Padmé’s shocked reaction is Qui-Gon Jinn’s stoic insistence that he is not on Tatooine to free slaves. The Jedi, chosen protectors of the galaxy, do not seem interested in righting something that is clearly very wrong because it falls outside of their assigned mandate. Qui-Gon very pointedly comments that “I didn’t come here to free slaves.”[10] Even after he realized Anakin’s great potential, even after he feels the boy may have a role to play in the fate of the galaxy, he still doesn’t take on the burden of freeing a slave until the opportunity presents itself into his mission.

Many people in the modern world would be just as astounded as Padmé was to know how solid an institution slavery is, and how few laws are enforced to regulate it in the current day and age. "Although there is no longer any state which legally recognizes, or which will enforce, a claim by a person to a right of property over another, the abolition of slavery does not mean that it ceased to exist. There are millions of people throughout the world —

mainly children — in conditions of virtual slavery, as well as in various forms of servitude which are in many respects similar to slavery."[11]

Until recent years, the United States had no real laws about human trafficking aside from the peonage laws enacted circa 1880 which enabled a person to liquidate a debt through labor.[12] It wasn't until the mid 1990s that the first US policy on trafficking was created, and this was done in response to a high profile case involving women imported from Mexico and forced to work in a Florida brothel under inhuman conditions.[13]

The United Nations has had established laws on slavery since December 10, 1948 when they adopted the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (Article 4 of which states "No one shall be held in slavery or servitude; slavery and the slave trade shall be prohibited in all their forms.") However, the first real global initiative on human trafficking didn't happen until the year 2000, when the US passed a policy known as the Victims of Trafficking & Violence Protection Act. It was this policy which ultimately led to the first real global initiative in the form of the UN Protocol to Prevent Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Women and Children.

So, with all of this said, we come to the most important question. What, exactly, was Lucas's point in making Anakin Skywalker come from the most humble origins imaginable… that of a slave?

I believe it is his extremely humble origins that make his fall to the dark side more believable and his redemption even more significant. He came from the worst possible place a human being can exist in. The choices he makes in his life reflect the values he learned there and his desire to escape. Although Anakin escaped the bonds of slavery on Tatooine, it is clear that his origins haunted him.

When we meet Anakin Skywalker he is a nine year old boy and already stoical about being a slave. Even as when enduring discipline from his master we see "He did not cringe or bow his head in submission; he stood his ground and took his scolding unflinchingly. He was a slave and Watto was his master. Scoldings were a part of life."[14]

This mantle of acceptance comes from being born into slavery – a place where he must accept *de facto* the idea that humans can be – and that he is – owned. It was so firmly engrained that when Qui-Gon presents him with the truth of his own freedom, he easily accepts that his mother must stay behind and remain a slave.

Anakin had always believed he was destined for greater things than a life of slavery and this belief was confirmed by those around him. The old spacer he met in town who told him he wouldn't be surprised at all if Anakin Skywalker became something more than a slave.[15] Shmi, who told Qui-Gon that Anakin deserves better than a slave's life surely must have recounted that to her son endlessly during the course of his young life.

Even as a child Anakin dreamed of freedom for himself and his mother.[16] He survived despite his slavery background. "..he was young and brave at heart, and he had lived his life pretty much on his own terms because to live it any other way would have broken him long ago. It hadn't been easy doing so, especially as a slave. He had survived mostly because he had been able to find small victories in difficult situations and because he had always believed that one day he would find a way to overcome the circumstances of his birth."[17]

The great irony of Anakin's existence is that he believes he is leaving slavery on Tatooine for a life of freedom with the Jedi. He doesn't see that he is basically exchanging a life of restriction for another life of restriction. Whether coincidence or by design, the fact that the Jedi refer to elders of their Order as "master" contains echoes of servitude and obedience, the basic foundations of slavery. From their very first days in the Order the Jedi are trained to obey. Theirs is a life of service and discipline, of subjugating their own will to their "masters" and to the Force.

It is only in the last seconds of The Phantom Menace that we see Anakin just beginning to realize that life with the Jedi is not necessarily a life of freedom. His new master Obi- Wan Kenobi tells him that someday he will see his mother again, but by then he will be a Jedi Knight. Unspoken is that there will be no freedom to see her in the meanwhile. Even so, Anakin accepts that he must give up something he loves for this new life of duty.

The Episode 2 novelization begins with Anakin dreaming he is back with his mother, who is no longer a slave. The dream quickly turns to a nightmare where he realizes he has failed her as she turns into glass and shatters. This vision haunts Anakin, but he is bound by duty and his commitment to the Jedi and he does not leave to go ensure his mother's safety. It isn't until a new mission brings him into contact with the second love in his life that he begins to question his devotion to duty.

When he visits Padmé's family home on Naboo Anakin can't help but recall his childhood as a slave.[18] He notes that Padmé doesn't want her family to worry for her safety and, in light of leaving his mother behind as a slave on Tatooine, he can understand that. Seeing Padmé's family life, he thinks how much he wishes he could free his mother and bring her there… to live the life she deserved.[19] Padmé herself points out the differences in their origins to Anakin. "I can't imagine what it's like to be a slave, Anakin."[20] even Padmé couldn't imagine… "It's worse to know that your mother is one."[21] She is the first one to talk about Anakin's life as a Jedi and how they aren't free to do the things they want or be with the people they love. She is the first one to make that connection – that perhaps as a Jedi Anakin still is not truly free.

Despite her inability to empathize with Anakin's past and present, she does have a great deal of sympathy for Anakin's situation and even goes so far as to place her self at great risk so he can return to Tatooine and discover the source of his unsettling visions about his mother. From the moment Anakin arrives on Tatooine his thoughts return to the time he was a slave and we begin to see just how his origins will shape his future.

We begin by seeing that he is unsure how he will react to seeing Watto, his former master, after all this time. He recalls his life on Tatooine and thinks "Not all of the memories were bad, he had to admit, but the good ones did not overcome the reality that he had been a slave. Watto's slave."[22] Still, he remembers that Watto treated him better than most slaves in Mos Espa are treated and hadn't beaten him too often but even this doesn't soften the fact that Watto wouldn't release his mother too. Upon finding Watto he is surprised to find that his mother is no longer a slave, that she is, in fact, a free woman now. Of course, by the time Anakin does manage to find her at the Tusken encampment he has arrived too late. She dies in Anakin's arms and his world falls apart.

His first irrational conclusion in the moments following his mother's death is that he never should have left her alone on Tatooine. His immense guilt feeds the fury he feels towards the Tuskens as he massacred them. Yes, he was angry at them for their role in her death,

but we get the sense that he was also angry at himself for, as he sees it, abandoning his mother to her fate.

The loss of his mother is a huge blow to Anakin's faith in all he believes in. Despite this fact, and despite blaming the Jedi at least on some level for taking him away from his mother, he remains loyal and bound in service to the Jedi Order. He subjugates the anger he feels to be obedient and loyal to the very Order he blames for the fact that he didn't return to Tatooine in time to save her. This illogical phenomenon is much the same as the way slaves serve their masters even in the face of great anger over their conditions. W.H. Auden sums this up when he says "Slavery is so intolerable a condition that the slave can hardly escape deluding himself into thinking that he is choosing to obey his master's commands when, in fact, he is obliged to."[23]

Though on the surface he remains bound by duty, Anakin does not remain totally subservient. In response to this loss Anakin commits the ultimate act of rebellion against the Jedi Order. He follows his heart and marries Padmé in secret. In a sense, it could be said he traded the old attachment the Jedi had forbidden him to his mother for a new forbidden bond with his wife.

Some might question Obi-Wan Kenobi's place in Anakin's life, arguing that Anakin loved him both as a brother and a father. No matter how we consider the affection in their relationship, it never quite dissolves the bonds of duty, of Master to apprentice. Bonds that would be, at least to Anakin, reminiscent of those between a master and a slave. If and when it came down to a choice of whose will would be done, Anakin would bow to Obi-Wan. We even see from their conversation on board the Invisible Hand that, despite becoming a Jedi Knight in his own right, Anakin has trouble referring to Obi-Wan as anything but "master." This, more than anything, serves as proof that their master/servant relationship still existed. In fact, even twenty years later it seems to define their relationship, as we see when Vader and Obi-Wan are reunited on the Death Star. Vader specifically tells him that he is no longer the learner, but is now the master.

As a Sith Lord, there is great irony in the fact that Vader serves Palpatine loyally and faithfully, even through decades of watching his master enslave others for his own gain. Many *Star Wars* fans have a theory that Anakin, by pledging allegiance to the Emperor, has returned to his bonds of servitude – perhaps to atone for leaving his mother to die on Tatooine or for failing Padmé or even for failing himself. This explanation is as good as any and better than most. An additional possibility that I don't personally subscribe to is that over time Vader became resigned to his position of servitude. Author Stanley Elkins portrays this phenomenon in slaves as being like the Jews in the concentration camps – that they became docile in order to survive.[24] Jean Jacques Rousseau says it better: "Slaves lose everything in their chains, even the desire of escaping from them."[25]

Whatever the reason, Vader – whether consciously or subconsciously – appears to have forsaken all hope of happiness. He seems to serve without the desire for materialistic rewards, or so we gather from the brief glimpse into his sparse quarters that we see in *The Empire Strikes Back*. He appears to exist solely to do his master's bidding, content to serve for the greater glory of Palpatine and the Empire. It could almost be said that, having failed both his mother and Padmé, he has chosen to return to the life of a slave. He remains in this enforced servitude until he finds the last of the loves that would not enslave him… that of a father for his son.

It is no stretch to believe that Luke's unwavering faith in his father's goodness could help Anakin find the strength to step away from his self-imposed bondage. As a child, Anakin dreamt of returning to Tatooine to liberate the slaves there. Perhaps this dream was more prophetic than literal. If we take things a step further it isn't hard to see that dream as an allegory for the fact that Vader did, in a sense, liberate the entire galaxy once they had become slaves to the Empire. In destroying the Emperor Vader did more than take the first great step in restoring the galaxy to freedom. He freed Anakin Skywalker from the shadow of slavery that had haunted him his entire life.

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Between Reality and Mythos
by Sean Dineen

It is a well understood truth that storytelling is an effective way of explaining how the world works. It does so by distilling large concepts into a manageable and palatable framework of understanding. These concepts transcend race, class, gender, time and age.

The saga we all love was created for a generation growing up, as George Lucas said, "without fairy tales" and the lessons they teach.[1] This paper will thoroughly examine a modern fairy tale, finding the similarities it has with the *Star Wars* saga and the lessons it has to teach the world.

Karen Lynn's fictionalized autobiography, "The Broken Hoof," is the enchanting quest for a young girl to find the mental, physical, and spiritual power within herself. With that knowledge, she finds she can take on the universe and restore peace and harmony to herself, her world and the people around her.

Our tale begins with Kitten, our story's heroine, being struck down with a bad reaction from a shot and put in a deep sleep. This is common in earlier fairy tales, that the hero or heroine must be taken out of the ordinary universe to transcend an earthly reality. As Joseph Campbell, noted myth expert, declares: "We cannot experience our new life, in the middle of our old one. We must be called out upon our quest."[2] The sleep ends with Kitten awakening to find she has a twisted left side, cerebral palsy serving here as a version of the mark of the quest. Kitten's quest here is to live a life like everybody else and to be treated as everybody else, without the scorn of peers whose eyes cannot see the inner glow beneath the twisted body and facade of a broken outer shell.

Kitten is therefore a parallel to young Anakin Skywalker when he is near-fatally maimed in his dual with Obi-Wan Kenobi. He awakens to find himself encased in armor, but where he required the armor to survive, Kitten must shed hers to thrive in a world of non-supportive, self-absorbed people with no light. Her next step is finding her mentor. Just as young Anakin must race for his freedom and Luke Skywalker must travel in search of Obi Wan, so Kitten must go to her carnival to find Pegasus, the broken carousal horse who became much more. "Suddenly without realizing what she was doing, she found herself strutting towards the crimson booth of the carousel ride."[3]

Because of her deep willingness to be open to herself and her own spiritual energy, Kitten is the only person who can hear Pegasus speak. "This was a very thrilling moment for Kitten. Within a few minutes he began to talk to her. My name is Pegusas, what's yours? He whinnied. He began to utter words."[4] He serves as this tale's version of the midiclorians. As Qui-Gon explains, "They constantly speak to us, telling us the will of the Force."[5]

Kitten's openness, her willingness to listen, links her with her new steed. When he is assaulted, her heart bleeds, and she is the only one to bother to rescue him when the carnival closes and these blessed horses are left to rot. "Oh, how dreadful the silence sounded. Something has to be done to save Pegasus and the other horses." He was washed in shadows from the darkest room, buried in a cold hallway. It looked like the horses were tossed into one huge pile."[6]

Kitten's dedication to her development and the healing of those around her enables Pegasus to demonstrate his true identity. He drops his painted on essence and becomes his true spiritual self, as a reward for her faithfulness and selfless love. Just as Yoda, the greatest of all Jedi Masters, appears at first as a childlike gnome, so Pegasus can begin his teaching work unencumbered by the plastic coating hiding his true powers. For he is an angelic figure here, who shakes the world with his glory. "She looked, and looked, hoping Pegasus would be there, but he was not. Behind her she heard a sound building. It was Pegasus. The rainbow stallion trotted up to her."[7] "Just then Pegasus awoke, he bent his neck, a neigh came forth. You are real, Pegasus, you are a real horse."[8]

He goes to work on Kitten's courage, developing within her a sense of her role as a messenger, showing her that a physical limitation doesn't have to mean loss of control over one's own destiny. Just as the Jedi use transcendence of matter and so called physical realities to teach spiritual awareness and connection with energy, so Pegasus creates physical strength in Kitten through running, as well as an inner peace to help Kitten face the world unafraid. The faith shown to her gives her a desire to make the rest of the world more in harmony. She too begins to stretch out her viewpoint to help others. "It's hard for me to believe it, but you have been transformed."[9]

Kitten slowly begins to explore her world. These new undertakings don't become the same kind of negative attachment for her that Padmé was for Anakin because they are not the only source of stability in her world. Kitten's awareness of her self is improving. She is now wise and patient, to paraphrase a disabled writers play. "She has value as a child of God."[10] During the first Death Star battle, Luke is able to switch off his targeting computer because he has found faith in The Force. Kitten must undergo her own trial by fire in the form of discouraging white coated experts. Like Admiral Motti, who berates Vader for his reliance on the Force, these experts regard faith in anything they cannot touch and quantify and see as less than pointless.

Many medical experts are limited to what is earthly visible. Kitten's awareness of her special gift is a spur to overcome fear and self doubt in the classroom, with her self, and with the larger world – particularly those who see her disability as a mark of disgrace rather than the keystone to a broader more profound vision. It is obvious to Kitten that her greatest enemies come from those who cannot see past the body to her inner glory. As Luke was unable to free his X-wing from the swamp on Dagobah, those who are trapped in this "crude matter" often hinder the great. Pegasus has been sent to remind Kitten that the spiritually awake need not be enslaved by physical trauma. "Particularly though, she felt honored, honored to have touched Pegasus, to have become his friend. He was safe and secure from the walls he left behind." Kitten ran and played the any other girl.[11] Her physical strength only exists as an outer reminder of the person she is being led to become.

Kitten is Anakin given proper encouragement, without his need to shape the world for his own benefit. Kitten is also very similar to Padmé, in that she has become wise through her own crucible, able to see the long term benefit of her own achievement. The new world she is being guided to create exists from her own heart outward. She no longer need fear her own body, but can harness it to give to those around her. She had redeemed the physical universe, just as Anakin at the very last possible moment came back into the light. Trapped within all that machinery and black will was the last remnant of his better self. His love for his son was the one thing that the dark side couldn't take from him.

The medical establishment in the real world and the *Star Wars* universe is overly mechanized. They see a client as someone to be altered, not listened to, just as Vader's medical droids put him back together without consideration for his pain. The rehab process, also very painful, is perhaps best understood to be a challenging of physical and spiritual energy, just like the force. Kitten has been able to motivate herself to see the eternal truth that relationships matter more than earthly pain and corporeal reality is as nothing compared to spiritual growth and union with the universe. This power within herself is the same essence which led our great Jedi, the Chosen One, to come back at the last possible moment, and in saving his son, save himself and the galaxy.

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Ms. Karen Lynn is one of the last of the pioneers in the movement for inclusion. She has been a mentor
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autobiography, "The Broken Hoof". She also fought and won the first civil rights case in California,
under the Rehab Act of 1973.

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THX 1138: *The First Draft of Star Wars*
by Keith Palmer

The title of George Lucas's first feature film may now most bring to mind a crescendo of sound as a lead-in to movies in selected theatres or on home video. Beyond that, some may recognize small references to it in his other films. (One of the first, "Prisoner transfer from Cell Block one-one-three-eight," was in fact adlibbed by Mark Hamill to Lucas's initial disapproval, but included in the end. (Rinzler 188)) Others may have heard how the initial incomprehension of Warner Brothers executives towards the finished *THX 1138* and their attempts to recut the film, combined with the comparable reaction of Universal to *American Graffiti*, motivated Lucas to seek an emphasis on creative control while developing *Star Wars*, something that helped a movie become a film saga. Even there, though, *THX 1138* may still seem just an early and peculiar low-budget experiment, something the more straightforward success of *Star Wars* led him away from no matter how many times he may comment how, with that success to finance him, he'll return to making "nonlinear films" one of these days. (Arnold 208) Beyond the possible distancing effect of its unusual surface qualities and more mature rating, though, the themes and ideas of *THX 1138* can be found, and there resonances between it and Star Wars begin to form one illuminating part of a consistent whole.

The Serial Connection

One of the earliest influences on Star Wars is often identified as the science fiction serials of the 1930s, but *THX 1138* opens with an actual excerpt from one of them, part of a trailer for the second chapter of "Buck Rogers." Whether as a period experiment to promote the serial or a change made for *THX 1138* itself, the movie's first words are "Buck Rogers in the twentieth century!" George Lucas himself has commented that "THX really is Buck Rogers in the twentieth century, rather than Buck Rogers in the future." (Rinzler 2) While the trailer could be interpreted as a sort of ironic commentary on "that Buck Rogers stuff" as representing an optimistic and uncomplicated vision of "the wonderful world of the future," "A world that sees a lot of our scientific and mechanical dreams come true," compared to what *THX 1138* presents, Lucas has also said in the movie's DVD commentary that one specific part of the trailer helps give one definition of heroism: "You know, there's nothing supernatural or mystic about Buck. He's just an ordinary, normal human being who keeps his wits about him." This, Lucas suggests, is also something the movie's main character accomplishes. While this might first seem to make THX 1138 himself more like characters such as Han Solo or Padme Amidala than the Jedi, acts such as Obi-Wan Kenobi finding "the high ground" in *Revenge of the Sith* can be seen as succeeding not through superior superhuman powers but just through understanding the situation.

Lucas says in the commentary that *THX 1138* is itself a film in three acts, each telling the same basic story in a different way. In the first, THX 1138 emerges from state-sponsored sedation to fall in love with his roommate LUH 3417, in the second, the most abstract, THX is captured and imprisoned in a wallless void until he decides to move into the unknown, and in the third, a more traditional action piece, he makes his escape.

A Distant Time and Place

The opening credits of *THX 1138* scroll in an unusual direction, sliding down from the top to the bottom of the screen; in the movie's DVD commentary, cowriter and sound designer

Walter Murch says this suggests just where the movie's action takes place. The first images that follow seem disconnected. There are closeups of numbers on a counter and line printer output. Video images from inside medicine cabinets show people with shaved heads opening the cabinets and responding to unseen voices asking them, "What's wrong?" Tall figures in black leather clothing and white helmets with chrome faces lift up a bloodied person as the unspecific yet resonant questions, "Are you now? Or have you ever been?" are asked or lead a small child, head also shaved, into what resembles an elevator lobby. THX 1138 is identified while shown assembling robots with remote-controlled manipulators, and people watch other people from within a control room filled with video screens, cueing prerecorded responses about taking "red capsules" or about consumption being standardized as a report comes in, "We've run across some illegal sexual activity." Then, an accidental explosion in a factory similar to THX's destroys "another 63 personnel giving them a total of 242 lost to our 195."

As the film continues, these images gain greater meaning even as more enigmatic moments are presented in between the actions of the main characters with a steady accompaniment of cryptic, half-heard statements as if over loudspeakers, somewhat reminiscent of the background announcements on the Death Star in *Star Wars*. As Murch suggests in the commentary, the intention is to make *THX 1138* seem like a foreign film "from the country of the future," "rather than about the future." Lucas was inspired by the unspoken assumptions in the Japanese films he had seen as a film student, and at one point had considered shooting the film in Japan, a country that seemed to include cultural elements of consumerism and social conformism, before realizing that was more or less impossible for a budget of under a million dollars, even in 1969. The movie was filmed instead at existing locations in and around San Francisco. As Murch says, this did help create a first "used future," later to become famous in Star Wars, in which things have an implied history and not everything is of the same very recent age. Beyond that, Lucas has mentioned in the DVD commentary for *Star Wars: A New Hope* that that movie was once thought to move very fast because, as in *THX 1138*, audiences were presented without explanation new environments familiar enough to the characters in them. Now that people are familiar with "the Star Wars universe," the story itself seems to move at a more leisurely pace.

Forbidden Love

It becomes apparent that THX has a problem. He is cautioned at work, and finds no solace in buying "dendrites," bright-coloured blocks taken home and then immediately placed in a "consumer" to be whisked away and, as Murch suggests, recycled to be bought again. Home holograms, very similar in appearance to the bluish images of Star Wars but offering erotic channels for both sexes (with mechanical aid), violence channels featuring robot officers endlessly beating people, and meaningless discussions provide only temporary distraction. The state's official religion of confessing to "OMM" in a telephone booth-like "unichapel" doesn't help either; as THX grows more agitated about his roommate LUH, insisting "What am I to her or she to me? Nothing," "We share nothing... but space," and at last "I think I'm dying," OMM asks "Could you be more... specific?" and offers stock blessings. At last, THX collapses opening his medicine cabinet and LUH comes to his aid. In his overview of Lucas's work, Jim Smith suggests a parallel between how "LUH's initial maternal response" "transfers into erotic attachment" (Smith 24) and Padme's developing attachment to Anakin Skywalker in *The Phantom Menace* and *Attack of the Clones*, but it can be interpreted that in this case LUH has taken an active role in THX's breakdown, adjusting his sedation. One pill she adds to his doses is red and yellow, perhaps an echo of a forbidden apple. Lucas says in the commentary that LUH has been experimenting with

not taking drugs, and some of what she says to him suggests how she has already changed: "I was so afraid. So alone. I wanted to touch you... so many times." That contact between them is at first tentative and awkward, Lucas suggesting the scene is cut in a jumpy, disorienting way to give a sense of a person suddenly trying to deal with new emotions, and THX does ask "I was happy. Why get me involved?", but the two in the end become lovers.

As with Anakin and Padme, though, this is not an unalloyed blessing. LUH fears that "They've been watching us," and despite THX's attempts at reassurance, it is suggested in the film that a third character with a job of watching others, SEN 5241, may know something. In search of a new roommate, SEN attempts to work within the system to transfer THX to his quarters. (In the commentary, Murch says that SEN may have homosexual tendencies deliberately kept ambiguous as an undercurrent or crush; Lucas says that the undertones were meant to be asexual.) Worried about continuing his own job without sedation even as LUH suggests that they could leave "and live in the superstructure," THX submits a report on SEN and, while assembling a robot, is identified as "suffering severe sedation depletion." Placed in "mindlock" as his coworkers flee the factory, THX is released just in time to prevent a catastrophic accident as his controllers declare they hold "no responsibility for error in mindlock." Lucas suggests in the commentary that the society THX is part of is bureaucratic and not quite able to deal with problems using its own rules; this can be seen as a first echo of the Empire of Star Wars, heavily armed but often outwitted by the Rebellion. In the case of *THX 1138*, though, ultimately nobody is in charge.

Conceptual Breakthrough

Put on trial, THX is placed in the "white limbo," a region without visible walls. He is run in circles by officer robots armed with electronic staffs and subjected to mysterious medical exams, suggested by Lucas in the commentary to be his society trying to determine why he would choose to live with unpleasant emotions, choose to injure himself. In the course of these experiments, he is reunited with LUH, who says that she's going to have a child and, in a small note echoing Leia and Padme, asks "Hold me."

Even this, though, is just another part of the experiment as suggested by Lucas, and officers appear to drag them apart again even as they say "We won't harm you. We only want to help you." Now, THX begins trying to fight back, but is knocked out by an electronic staff and carried away to be placed among other prisoners. One of them is SEN, who bears no outward grudge. In this part of the "white limbo," the prisoners pass the time by a variety of means, including making speeches. (Lucas says in the commentary that SEN's speeches, in which he declares that "One idea could get us out of here!" and "We need dissent, but we need a creative dissent," are based on Richard Nixon's.) THX only waits as all this happens and an officer brings in a diminutive "shell dweller," a first example ahead of Jawas and Ewoks of using size to distinguish beings from different places. Then, at last, he begins walking away from the others. This is one of the most significant parts of the movie according to Lucas, THX realizing that he's "living in a cage ... with the door open" (Smith 28), and that at the end of discussion you have to act. As with the officers, and the society itself, people are kept confined by their own inability to recognize alternatives. This can be seen as prefiguring the Force itself in Star Wars, for which belief in one's own potential is essential.

The Wise Man by the Roadside

After a moment's confusion and disbelief, SEN does manage to follow THX into the void with an armful of food and a last speech about going out "to form an accurate and functional escape." His incessant worried comments as they lose sight of the others, asking if THX is "going after LUH" and wondering whether the air is getting thinner or the pressure is getting greater, as THX continues to say nothing in response may, just perhaps, be seen as a first echo of C-3P0 and R2-D2's different strategies after landing on Tatooine.

Then, they meet a third person in the limbo, who proposes that "maybe you were travelling in circles" and points the way out. Walking into darkness at last, the three find an ordinary door and plunge through into a tremendous crush of noise and people, in which SEN becomes separated from the others. As a budget is set for the recapture of the fugitives, the new person explains to THX that he's a hologram from "the fantasy bureau... You know, electrically-generated realities and all that." "Stuck in the same circuit for too long," he "wanted to be part of the real world" and "left." The hologram, as suggested by Lucas in the commentary, is a first example of an archetype drawn from his early studies of anthropology (he first read Joseph Campbell's works in his second year of college, right before deciding to become a filmmaker), the magical character found along the side of the road. At times somewhat obtuse, the hologram is nevertheless able to perceive things the other characters can't.

Speed as Escape

SEN descends alone to the lowest levels of his world, and faced with the unknown in the form of a muddy construction site and strange crawling creatures underfoot he loses his nerve, "refuses the call," and heads back up again. Finding his way into a sort of television studio with a giant image of OMM, he tries to explain that "A little adjustment... can make all the difference," only to be found by a robed figure and informed "This is no place for prayer." At last, he just waits until taken into custody and led away.

In the meantime, THX and the hologram have shut themselves up in a small control room with officers on the outside burning their way through the lock, a situation reminiscent of R2-D2 and C-3P0 on the Death Star. Querying the system, THX discovers a report that LUH has been "consumed" and her name has been reassigned to a fetus in a bottle. He rejects the suggestion of the hologram that "that's your roommate"; the hologram is philosophical about the matter, guessing that beings like him aren't supposed to "understand any of that stuff." The officers, continuing to insist that "We are here to help you," push in the door and fall to the floor in the process, and THX and the hologram are able to vault over them and continue their escape. As with the Empire's stormtroopers, the officers are ominous in appearance but at times figures of fun.

THX and the hologram find their way to parked "jet cars." While THX is able to start his at once, the hologram, created by technology and yet its antithesis, has difficulty. With THX waiting in what Lucas suggests in the commentary is concern and officers approaching, the hologram starts his car at last and drives straight into a parking garage pillar; he may disappear from his wrecked car after that. THX heads off into endless tunnels, pursued by officers on motorcycles. (One of the adlibbed background comments at this point is "I think I ran over a Wookiee back there on the expressway.") Lucas comments that this chase is a sort of cinematic experiment in itself, with the chased and the pursuers never in the same shot until the very end and little to impede either. Technology itself is something of the opponent, though, and THX stalls out as his car overheats as Anakin Skywalker would later do in *The Phantom Menace*, then recovers to crash through barriers and drive over

boundary markers in an echo of the podrace from that movie. This scatters enough debris on the roadway to make one of the motorcycles wipe out; at the end of the chase, after THX has crashed into scaffolding at the end of a tunnel still under construction, the other officer wipes out there.

Fighting off an attack from more bestial "shell dwellers," THX at last begins climbing up an enormous ladder, officers still following him. However, his "account is 6 percent over budget," and the bureaucratic society terminates the case and discontinues the operation. With one last declaration that "You have nowhere to go" and "You cannot survive outside the city shell," the officers back away from THX; he continues up the ladder and emerges into a world defined only by a setting sun filling much of the frame. A bird is visible flying past this sunset; in the commentary, Murch says that he and Lucas considered reshooting that sequence when they first discovered it, but decided that it offers at least a measure of hope for THX. As in *Star Wars: A New Hope* and *Revenge of the Sith*, a sunset may be taken to be a sign of hope.

Conclusion

While making *The Empire Strikes Back*, George Lucas said "I looked at *THX* and said if I wanted to change the world, it was no use saying how awful our society is or how stupid." (Arnold 189) During the making of *Return of the Jedi*, he said "It was then I realized that in *THX* I was trying to get people to believe in an idea--and move them with an idea. It was a very pessimistic film, saying how awful things were", and "I began to think that in order to do anything in film that will have social repercussions--you have to make an optimistic movie that gives people hope." (Peecher 236) Twenty-five years after that first comment, in the DVD commentary for *THX 1138*, Lucas says that he's never made a film he doesn't like to watch and that his heart is still with films like it, and on the DVD package he calls the movie "still one of my proudest moments." All of these comments are valid in their own way: the Star Wars movies present a larger world with more scope for heroism than simple escape, but *THX 1138* presents its own reality in a comparable way and shows a similar theme of moving into a larger world. (With *American Graffiti* also presenting a similar theme, Lucas's first three feature films have been suggested to form a "first trilogy." (Rinzler 304)) *THX 1138* has its own unusual appeal, but it can also provide a new perspective on a different, more familiar world.

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